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AmericanGirl

September/October 2001

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See AG online!

Visit **americangirl.com** to peek behind the scenes of AG magazine! Always get a parent's permission before surfing the Web or giving out your full name, address, or any other personal info.

Get Psyched!
Trying out for a team or a play? Here's how to do your best.

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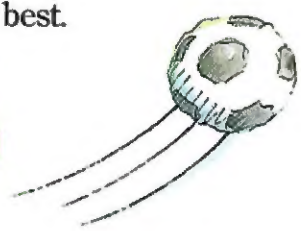

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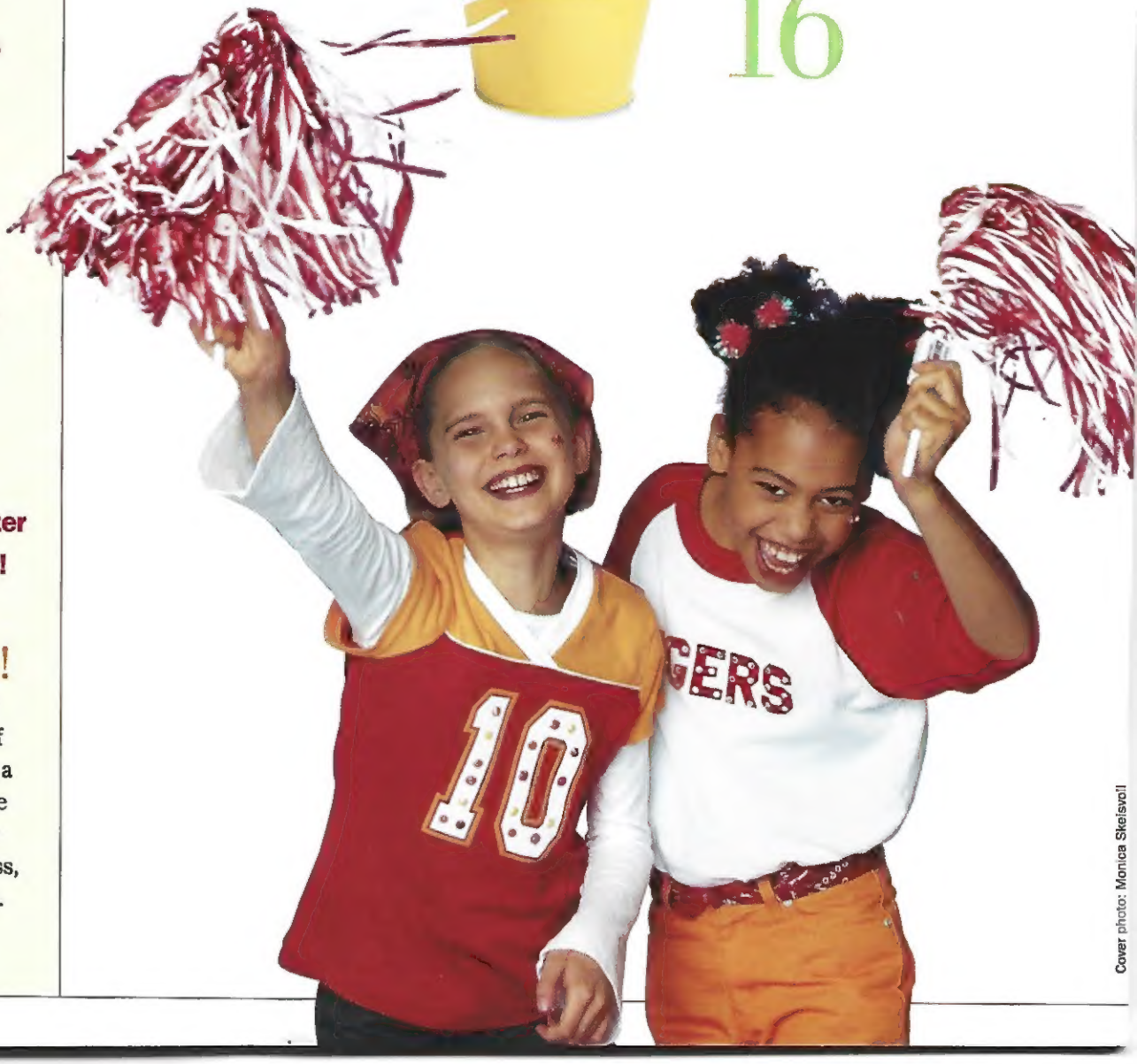

Cover photo: Monica Skeisvoll

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americangirl.com

About the Cover

Meet Emma Kaptein, age 10. Emma tried on oodles of back-to-school outfits at our photo shoot. Deciding which one to put on the cover was tough! Do you agree with our choice? Go to **americangirl.com** and vote for the style *you* like best!

TGIF

End your week with a fabulously fun Friday!

22

Born to Be Wild!

When baby animals need help, this girl knows what to do.

12

Emma Kaptein

Look for fun facts sprinkled throughout the magazine!

Letters from You

Wedding Belle

I enjoyed Amelia's "Dressed for Distress" in the May/June 2001 issue. I'm going to be in my brother's wedding soon, and Amelia showed me what it's like to be in a wedding and how much work it can be for just one small part of it. Plus, it prepared me for the kinds of clothes I may have to wear. Thank you so much.

Hannah Bauthues
Age 12, Washington

Tin Tips

Thanks so much for putting tips for people who wear braces in the May/June issue. I got braces about six months ago, and now I feel good about having a mouth full of metal!

Amy Thompson
Age 9, Michigan

A+ Art

Thank you for "Letter Art" in May/June's issue. I had to do a report for school, and I had no idea what to do for the title page. I used your ideas for it, and I got an A with a note from my teacher that said, "I loved your title page!"

Monica Garwood :-)
Age 12, California

Press Success

In the May/June issue, I loved your craft, "Flowery Fun," about pressing flowers. Last year, I received a leaf and flower press for my birthday, and I used it quite a bit before I put it away for the winter. Your article inspired me, and the day after I read it, I pressed some flowers. I've found that bleeding hearts look really nice when they are pressed. Your ideas are neat.

Carol Cayo
Age 11, Wisconsin

Write to Us!

Want to drop us a line? Write us at:

AmericanGirl
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

You can also send letters via e-mail to im_agmag_editor@pleasantco.com.

No matter how you write us, be sure to include your name and birth date. We can't use every letter we receive, but we read and learn from each one.

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The National Magazine Awards Finalist

Girls Express

Buzzword

American girls everywhere will be using this buzzword this season:

brouhaha

How to say it: BROO-hah-hah

What it means: a commotion or an uproar

Where it comes from: No one knows for sure how *brouhaha* came about. This French word sure has lasted a long time, though—it's been around for more than 500 years!

One way to use it: "A brouhaha started at the party when Julie bobbed for an apple—and found a worm in it!"

The buzzword is tucked somewhere into this issue of *American Girl*. Can you find it? Answer on page 42.

Chalk Walk

When 11-year-old Whitney Turner draws on the sidewalk, she thinks big. Last year, she and her dad drew two giant crouching tigers for the Italian Street-Painting Festival in California. Over a weekend, hundreds of artists turned three city blocks into a patchwork of art.

To get started, Whitney chose a picture from a book. Then, as people watched, she and her dad mapped out the scene onto a six-foot square of pavement. It took them eight hours to finish! When they were done, the tigers seemed to leap off the street. The colorful critters didn't stick around, though—after the festival, a crew hosed down the block. That's O.K. with Whitney. She explains, "The fun part is the process!"

Host your own art-y party! Give each person a section of sidewalk to fill. Tip: Gently rub the chalk into the surface. Whitney used her finger and a brush to fill tiny holes.

"Chalk Walk" photos: Peggy Parks Photography Illustrations: Paul Meisel

Homework Help

Got school stuff to memorize? Try these quick tricks!

"I learned the presidents by putting their names to the song 'It's Gonna Be Me' by *NSYNC. Here are some of the words: 'George Washington is first, you see—John Adams is next in line.' I danced to the song, too. It worked great!"

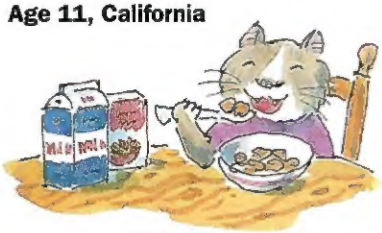
Katie Aki
Age 14, Colorado

"To learn your times tables, draw a hopscotch. Write a multiplication problem in each square. As you hop, answer the questions."

Jamie Lee Zaleski
Age 10, Pennsylvania

"My violin teacher helped us remember the order of sharps with this sentence: 'Fat Cats Go Down And Eat Breakfast.'"

Eliza Simunovich
Age 11, California



From Cats...

When Emily Weber, age 11, visited her state capitol with her class last year, she discovered something: Maryland had a state dog and even a state dinosaur, but no state cat!

Emily and her friends wrote to a state legislator, asking him to sponsor a bill to make the calico the official state cat. The girls also told state senators and representatives why the fancy feline was a qualified candidate.

From left: Abby Rawlings, Molly Nelson, Lexi Gentry, January Mullen, Emily Weber—and calico cat Maggie!

"The calico cat has the same colors as the Maryland flag—yellow, red, and black," says Emily.

The girls' hard work paid off. Last April, Governor Parris Glendening signed the bill into law. Sounds like a *purr*fect ending!

...To Bats!

They love to scare and fly into your hair. Right? Wrong! Bats are people's friends! That's what Emily Kahm, 14, and her Missouri friends set out to prove. They created "Batty 4 Bats," a class project that teaches people about the importance of bats. "Many people think bats are ugly and dirty," says Emily. "They're really clean, shy, and intelligent." In fact, bats help control bugs—one bat can eat up to 600 insects an hour!

To spread the bat facts, the girls held programs for hundreds of local residents. Visitors learned everything from which species are endangered to how bats use sound waves to find food. Emily says, "We're changing people's *battitudes!*"

From left: Natalie Blackburn, Lisa Fahey, Emily Kahm, and Courtney Torres placed first in the Bayer/National Science Foundation Awards. To enter this year's contest, visit bayernsfaward.com.

Kooky Clothes

Scratch-and-sniff jeans? Sneakers with picture pockets? We asked girls to test some of fall's wackiest fashions!

Jean Scene

"The vanilla-scented jeans had a good smell and came in a nice khaki color. The smell wasn't very strong after the first washing, though."

Hannah Gómez
Age 13, Arizona

Scratch N Sniff Denim by Levi's, $35

Photo Footwear

"At first I thought these shoes were weird, but they grew on me! The pockets for photos are cool, but I think the price is too much."

Gracie Lindquist
Age 12, Wisconsin

Runamok Pics by Nike, $65

True Story

Katie, Megan, and Rachel become Halloween experts.

Dear American Girl,

We're sisters living in Sweden while our dad works here. Last year, some editors at Julia, a Swedish magazine for girls, called our school asking for American students. Halloween is a new holiday in Sweden, and the editors wanted to know how we celebrate it in America. We went to a photo shoot and an interview. Later, our story was in the magazine!

The writers asked us funny questions, like what we say when we ring someone's doorbell, and whether we eat all our candy at once. We also told them how we make our home look like a haunted house. A lot of kids here have never done that.

The Swedish have their own holiday traditions. Many kids here do dress up like funny witches and collect candy door to door—at Easter!

Sincerely,

Katie Griffin
Age 16

Megan Griffin
Age 13

Rachel Griffin
Age 12

Here we are in the magazine. The caption says "Sisters Griffin."

AG POLL

Your answers:

In our May/June issue, we asked you if you've ever quit something you loved because your friends thought it wasn't cool. Here's what you said:

Frances Hooker, 12, of Georgia quit playing football because her friends thought it was "ungirlish." "I started again because football is something I love," she says. "Why should I stop?"

Next question:

If you could be on any TV show, which one would you pick? Why? Write your answer below.

Cut out your answer and mail it to us with your name, address, and birth date.

Jeepers Peepers!

Turn "fright night" into "sight night!" Volunteer to collect used eyeglasses and sunglasses on October 31. LensCrafters and Lions Club International will clean, repair, and deliver them to needy people around the world. Go to www.sightnight.org for more info.

Help Wanted!

We've been hearing a lot about a special code girls use with cell phones and pagers. In this code, everything gets shortened—"lol" stands for "laughing out loud," and "CUL8r" stands for "see you later." Do you use this e-code? Send your favorite words and abbreviations to the address on page 2 with your name, address, and birth date. We'll BCNU!

Cut out your answer and mail it to us.

Traveling Teddies

California

Kendra Wong
Age 12, California

Washington, D.C.

Cecilia Winter
Age 9, Georgia

England

Sophy Beers
Age 10, Florida

Bahamas

Macy Grace Donaldson
Age 12, New York

Oregon

Ashley Parker
Age 9, Oregon

Italy

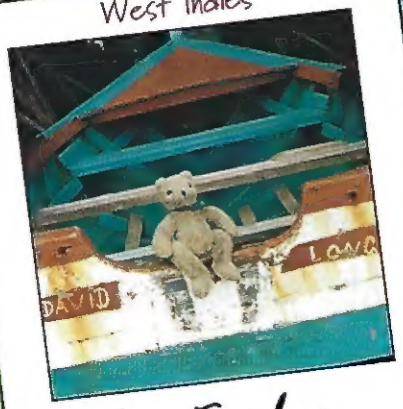
Candice Tuthill
Age 11, Colorado

We asked you to take pictures of your bears on vacation. Check out these globe-trotting tourists!

Russia

Shelby McDowell
Age 10, Pennsylvania

West Indies



Victoria Trudeau
Age 12, Michigan

Africa

Regina McCarthy
Age 8, Illinois

Mexico

Katie Doody
Age 10, Texas

Grand Canyon

Jenna Pile
Age 11, California

Colorado

Gretchen Hodonay
Age 11, Colorado

France

Annie Massa
Age 10, New York

New Contest: Design an Envelope

We get tons of girls' letters in fancy, hand-decorated envelopes. Now it's your turn to make a letter better! Would you use sparkly gel pens or colored pencils? Would you try for a tie-dyed design? Decorate the front of an envelope, and send it to the address on page 2 with your name and birth date. **Important!** Please write your return address on the *back* of the envelope. Deadline: October 15, 2001. Winners will appear in the March/April 2002 issue.

Amelia's Notebook

If they bottled a perfume called ~~September scents~~ it would smell like:

↑ the fresh aroma of rubbery pink eraser crumbs for those "mistake-be-gone" moments

↑ the heavenly scent of newly sharpened pencils for inspiring note-taking

↑ the fragrance of hot-off-the-press books: ink and cardboard with a hint of woodiness. Ahh!

SCHOOL STORIES

by Marissa Moss

and former kindergartner, Amelia!

Sept. 18

The best part of starting school is getting new supplies. The worst part is getting new clothes and seeing how much I haven't grown since last year. It never fails – I'm always the smallest kid in the class. Mom says I'm getting big, but she's a mom – she has to say that.

me
next-shortest kid, relieved to have someone even shorter
tallest kid, able to reach the highest books, see movies without being blocked, and never bumped into by grown-ups who don't notice her existence
Will I always be looking up people's noses instead of face-to-face?

Sept. 20

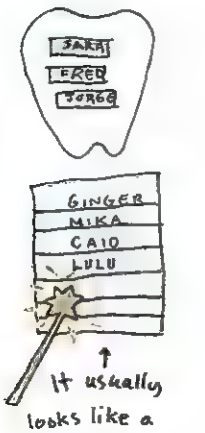
My teacher, Ms. Busby, announced today that since we're fifth graders, we have a responsibility to help the younger kids. Some students are going to monitor the playground, and some will help in the library. But I've got a special job – I get to tell stories to the kindergartners every Friday for 15 minutes.

You can use a felt board and cut some felt into animals and people to help tell your stories.
Sounds great!
I was excited! I remember going to the library when I was little and listening to stories told that way.

Things you do in kindergarten but never again:

Sept. 28

Today was my first day telling stories. I was really nervous! But when I got there, the classroom looked so cozy and familiar. It even smelled familiar – that old crayon-and-glue smell. All the kindergartners sat cross-legged on the rug, looking up at me and just waiting for me to talk.



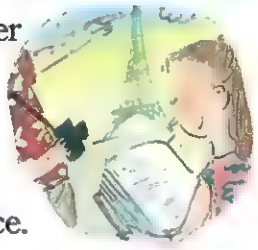
My voice was kind of squeaky at first, but then my story got going, and I forgot to be nervous. I came to a SCARY part and their eyes all got big. When I made something silly happen, they laughed. I had so much fun! Now I can't wait to do it again.

I guess I've grown after all. Maybe I'm still short next to the other fifth graders, but with the kindergartners, I'm definitely the biggest kid in the class! ★

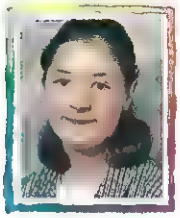
Too Much?

Do you love doing something so much that it gets you in trouble? How does an obsession affect you?

When I read a Harry Potter book, I can't put it down. I went to France with my family, and we stayed in a mansion and went sightseeing, but I spent most of my time reading a Harry Potter book. Now I feel like I wasted my time in France.



Mary Burke
Age 8, Illinois



I tap dance and I'm constantly practicing. I don't even notice I'm doing it. My feet just have a habit of tapping. My friends sometimes get annoyed by it. I try to stop, but I just end up doing it the next minute!

Melissa Ouzounian
Age 13, California

This year I've had trouble paying attention in school, mostly because I'm obsessed with drawing. I draw when I'm supposed to be listening. To stop, I write notes that say "No doodling!" and stick them to my desk.

Erica Witkugel
Age 10, Ohio

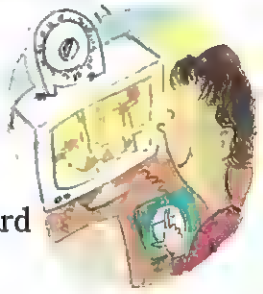
I am obsessed with horses, and everybody knows it. If I write a poem or a story, it's always about horses. Every Sunday I work and ride at a stable. I have horse books, horse stuffed animals, and horse statues. The bad thing about it is that at school, if the word *horse* comes up, some people tease me.

Ashley Boerner
Age 12, Illinois

Whenever my obsession interferes with my life, I get back on track. I try to remember that it's not as important as other things in my life, like school, my family, and my future.

Laurel Watt
Age 12, California

When I found a computer game I liked, I'd play it almost nonstop. My chores were neglected. I limited myself to only 30 minutes of playing until I finished my work. It actually made playing more fun, because I'd look forward to it.



Sarah Tagtmeyer
Age 12, Indiana

Sometimes I read too much and put off my homework and other things I need to do. Now I put my book in a hard-to-reach place until I finish all of my work.

Anna Miller
Age 11, California

I love to sing. It gets me in trouble in school because I sing when I should be quiet. Now I make up my own songs to help me remember things that are important!

Desirae Shinault
Age 10, New York

The thing that I love to do more than anything is play Chinese jump rope. I am jumping all the time. My mom and dad say, "Can you *please* stop jumping?" But I can't. Even if I don't have a rope, I jump on lines on the floor. It drives all of my family crazy.

Caralina Goodman
Age 9, California

I'm obsessed with instant messaging. I go on the computer every day and talk to my friends. Sometimes I don't get off when I'm supposed to. It makes my parents mad.

Elizabeth Goldberg
Age 12, Connecticut

Whenever I had free time, I'd turn on the TV. My mom and dad made a rule that I can only watch a little TV, and only on weekends. Now I am playing sports, reading books, and playing with my friends much more.

Colleen Logan
Age 10, New York

I'm passionate about listening to music, and it has gotten me into trouble. When I have my personal CD player on, I can't hear the outside world. This includes my mom. See the problem? But nothing could make me hate my music.

Adrienne Hirsch
Age 11, Kansas

It's great to have a strong interest in something, but don't let it take over your life. Try some other stuff, too. For example, if you're wild about books, get involved in a sport, too. Don't just do one thing.

Grace Olson
Age 10, Washington

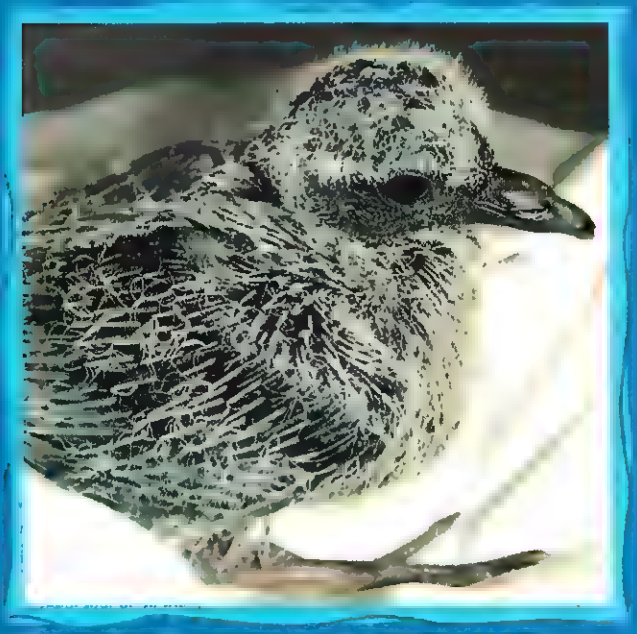
Speak from Your Heart

Next subject: Being alone. What activity do you love to do by yourself? Why is it better than doing it with a friend? What's the difference between being alone and being lonely?

Send answers, name, birth date, and school photo to: American Girl 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton, WI 53562. While we can print only about a dozen letters in each Heart to Heart, we read and learn from every one!

Deadline: October 7, 2001. Some answers will appear in the March/April 2002 issue.

it takes time for a mallard duckling to learn to fly.



No matter how tame and lovable these cute creatures may seem, Tia Traut knows the animals she helps are...

Born to Be

Wild!

Alone in the wild, a baby scrub jay has no way to feed itself. Maybe the tiny bird's mother was eaten by someone's pet or was hit by a car. Whatever happened, the baby bird is all alone now—and totally helpless. But with the help of the caring volunteers at one California wildlife center, the baby will get a chance to live. Tia Traut feels proud as she watches her grandma feed the young jay through a dropper, slowly nursing it. "Without us, he'd be dead," Tia explains.

Tia looks on as her grandma feeds a tiny scrub jay.

"Animals have feelings, just like humans," Tia says. "I like to help protect them and help them survive." Tia, 13, has been volunteering alongside her grandma for more than two years. Though she's not old enough to handle the injured animals and baby animals in the center's hospital, she loves learning all about them—Tia wants to be an animal caretaker at a wildlife center when she grows up. For now, Tia helps out with the animals that live at the center permanently, and she teaches younger kids about wild animals.

A gopher snake caught in an old net needs help!

Animal ER

Like the scrub jay (who's still recuperating), most of the animals that come to the hospital at the wildlife center are helpless. Left alone, they would probably die. The center's staff gives the animals the care they need to grow strong enough to return to the wild. What kinds of animals come into the hospital? "Lots of baby birds—jays, doves, hummingbirds, and ducks," says Tia. "We get lots of other animals, too—opossums, squirrels, snakes, even some foxes!"

Tia's favorites are the owls. "They're really pretty," she explains, "and we don't see them at the center that often."

The hospital's staff tries to handle the animals as little as possible. That's because when these animals go back to the wild, they need to be afraid of humans in order to survive. "When the caretakers feed the bigger animals,"

This opossum, who lives at the center permanently, helps Tia teach people about wild animals.

Photos: Olivier Laude, Wendy Winsted

"To make an opossum's dinner, I put in half a can of dog food, chopped fruit, two small fish called *smelt*, and some vitamins on top," says Tia. "When you bring the opossums in to eat, they're excited! They always go for the fish first."

Tia explains, "they just put the food in the cage and that's it. We don't want them to get used to humans at all." The center releases animals only "when they can defend themselves and when they can eat by themselves," Tia says. That takes anywhere from a few weeks to nearly a year.

Home Free

Tia's favorite part of her job is helping to set wild animals free in their natural homes. But the nature center where Tia works is near a big city, so not all of the animals it helps live in the woods. Tia has even released young opossums in her own backyard! Wherever an animal lives, "we bring it to its habitat," Tia explains, "and then we open the box gently, so the animal can check out its surroundings and its new life. And we watch it for a while, just to see if it's going to be O.K."

Sometimes animals run right out of their boxes. But other times, they're a bit timid. Some animals need a little time to realize that they're home again. Tia never knows which way an animal will react. "One time, my grandma and I went to the shoreline with some Canada geese. When we set the geese free, we went back to our van, and they started chasing us," recalls Tia. "We had to bring them back to the water. We left again, and we were driving away, when all of a sudden we heard them:

Tia watches a young mallard as he heads back to his home in the wild.

The nature center where Tia volunteers cares for more than 700 birds each year!

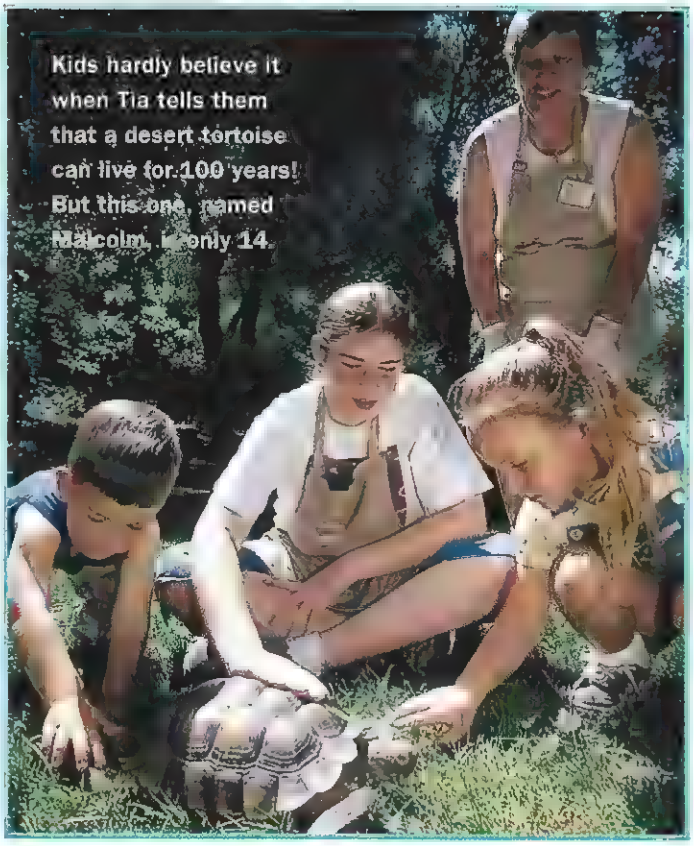
'Honk, honk!' They were still following us. We had to sit and watch them for about 20 minutes—just let them be in the water—before we could leave." Tia later learned that the geese had joined a local flock and were just fine.

Like the geese, most animals that get released do succeed once they're back in the wild. The protection, care, and love they've received at the center really pay off. "It kind of gives me a little tingly feeling to let them go," Tia explains. "I helped them, and I'm letting them go back in the wild. It just feels good."

Learning to Love

The nature center's staff works hard to help animals get well enough to go back to life in the wild. But some animals never make a full recovery. "When we can't release them, we keep them here for the rest of their lives," Tia explains. Dusty, a barn owl, first came to the center after someone found him, injured, by the side of a road. He'd been hit by a car. Dusty's wing never healed properly, so now he lives at the center and helps kids learn about owls and the animal food chain. Dusty is one of Tia's favorite animals. "He's just so soft," she says, "and when he opens his wings, it's really quiet."

Like the animals in the hospital, the center's permanent resident animals need care and attention. Working with these animals is not


Kids hardly believe it when Tia tells them that a desert tortoise can live for 100 years! But this one, named Malcolm, is only 14.

a glamorous job. "Every day different cages get cleaned. I prepare animals' food. I check cages to see that everything's O.K.," Tia explains. "It's hard work, but I know I'm helping the animals."

The animals return the favor by helping Tia teach young kids about wildlife, a big part of her job. She has shared her love of wild animals with hundreds of children. "When I'm working with kids," Tia explains, "I feel good because I make a difference in their lives. They go home and they say, 'Hey, Mom, guess what I found out today?' And it's something I taught them!" ★

How Can *You* Help?

"If you find an injured or abandoned wild animal, just leave it alone!" says Tia. Whatever happens, be sure to follow these rules:

- **Never touch a wild animal with your bare hands. Animals carry lots of germs.**
- **Don't give an injured or abandoned animal anything to eat or drink.**
- **Never try to keep a wild animal as a pet.**
- **Call animal services or the nearest wildlife center for help. It's always best to talk to someone who knows exactly what to do.**

Back to Cool!

50 tips to get you ready for an awesome new school year!

1 Have a back-to-school review with your best friends. Compare class lists and show each other your new school supplies.

2 Wear a comfortable outfit on the first day of school. You'll feel more confident and won't have to worry about keeping your clothes tucked in and wrinkle-free!

3 If you aren't an early bird, practice waking up early the week before school starts. Get up 10 minutes earlier than normal on the first day. The next day, get up 20 minutes earlier than normal, and so on. You might even wake up before your alarm goes off on the first day of school!

4 Place your alarm clock across the room from your bed. When the alarm goes off, you'll just have to get up!

5 Start the school year off on a new note by rearranging your room. Place your bed facing the window for a sunny start to every morning.

6 **Think ahead!** Before you go to bed, pick out your clothes and organize your backpack for the next day. These are two things you won't have to worry about in the morning.

7 If you are going to a **new school** and live close enough to walk, do a **practice** run the day before school starts. You'll know how much time it will take you in the morning, and you won't have to worry about being late.

8 Make a special clip for the refrigerator to hold **VIPs** (very important papers). Decorate a clothespin and attach a magnet to the back. Hang it where **Mom** and **Dad** can see it.

9 Have a **cereal** sundae! In a dish, layer **yogurt**, your favorite cereal, and fresh fruit.

10 Make a **berry** tasty lunch! Use fresh berries instead of jelly on your PB&J.

11 Turn on your favorite CD or radio station in the morning and **listen** to some **tunes**. The music will get you going!

12 To **camouflage** a pencil, use opaque permanent markers and draw random splotches.

13 Apply rhinestones with jewel glue for a **glam** look.

14 Use opaque permanent markers to create a **plaid** pattern.

15 If you are afraid of not being able to find your classroom, here's a **tip**: Rooms that are numbered in the **100s** are on the **first** floor, **200s** are on the **second** floor, and so on. If you are really lost, ask someone for **help!**

16 Stay **healthy** this year! Always wash your hands with warm water and **soap**. Scrub while **singing** the "Happy Birthday" song twice. That way, you know you've scrubbed long enough to remove germs!

Illustrations: Valerie Coursen Photos: Mike McKenzie/Hot Shots, Monica Skeisvoll, Greg Zocher/Hot Shots Styling: Beth Buzogany, Judy Keith, Jillian Reville, Mara Schiavetti

Skip the brown paper bags for covering your books this year!

Try these ideas:

17 Cover with funky wrapping paper

18 Use black paper and decorate with gel pens

19 Use a colorful bandanna (adhere with double-stick tape)

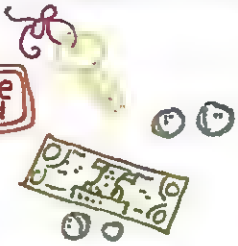
20 If you've heard bad rumors about a teacher whose class you are in this year, don't fret yet. Get to know him or her before making a judgment. Don't waste time worrying about a teacher who might end up being the best one you've ever had!

Give your backpack a new look! Apply rhinestones or fabric appliques to your backpack with jewel glue.

21 Don't get locked out! Ask your parents to make a copy of your house key and to give it to a trustworthy neighbor.

23 To keep your lunch money organized, use empty film canisters and label them Monday through Friday. Store them in your locker so you know exactly how much you have every day. Just don't borrow money from the next day!

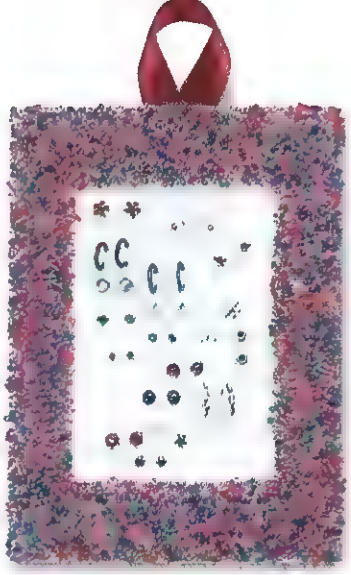
25



Make an emergency kit for your backpack. Include a phone card or money to call home, parents' work numbers (if you don't know them by heart), an extra house key, and a pack of tissues for a sudden case of the sniffles.

Show your sparkly style! Get a T-shirt or jacket. Slide a piece of wax paper inside. Place rhinestones on the shirt or jacket. Once your design is ready, attach rhinestones with fabric glue. Let dry.

26 Make an **earring** organizer. Trim a piece of plastic canvas (available at craft stores) to fit on the back of a mat. Glue the canvas to the back. Let dry. Apply double-stick tape to the front of the mat and place it in an empty box. Sprinkle on seed beads, bugle beads, and micro-beads. Press until the beads stick. Glue on a ribbon and **hang** it up!



27 Make adorable spiral **hair** accessories. Take 4 inches of thin, flexible wire and a shank button. Thread the wire through the button shank and wind it around a few times so that it is secure. Wind the remaining wire around a marker to make it **spiral**. Twist several into your hair!

28 Make **mini** locker magnets. Cut out images and words from magazines. Place them on business-card-sized self-adhesive magnets (available at office supply stores) and trim.

29 Make sure you shine in your school picture! Wear simple clothing in solid colors. Ask your mom what colors look best on you. Keep accessories to a minimum. Have someone take a practice photo of you.

30 Get a **bucket** for your **important** project supplies, such as pens, sharpened pencils, markers, a ruler, scissors, tape, glue, etc. If it's always in the bucket, you'll know right where to find it when you need it.

31 Think about ordering your school supplies online! The Web site **gradepak.com** sells backpacks that contain everything from erasers to a pocket dictionary.

32 Use the Internet for help with your homework. Go to **awesomelibrary.org** or **bjpinchbeck.com** to access information on everything from insects to skyscrapers.

33 Team up with your classmates and create a Web page about your school. The site **geocities.com** allows you to design a Web page with your own URL!

35 **Go team!** Cheer on a school sports team that you've never seen and root for their **victory.**

36 *Totally hip* **hooray!** *Show your school spirit from your hair clips to your fingertips!*

37 If you get bored practicing your **instrument** after school, create a stuffed **animal** audience to watch you perform. Invite your **pet,** too!

38 18)360 = 2

If you get discouraged by a difficult **test** or tough math **problem,** just remember that your teachers want you to do well. Ask for **extra help** when you're stuck.

39 When you **clean** out your **backpack,** make sure you are standing near a recycling bin. All the **extra papers** you want to throw away can go directly in the bin instead of cluttering up the counter!

40 **After school,** treat yourself to a delicious **apple smoothie.** In a blender, combine 8 ounces apple cinnamon yogurt, 3 tablespoons frozen apple juice concentrate, ½ cup applesauce, a dash of cinnamon, and 2 ice cubes. Ask an adult to blend well. Pour in a glass and **enjoy!**

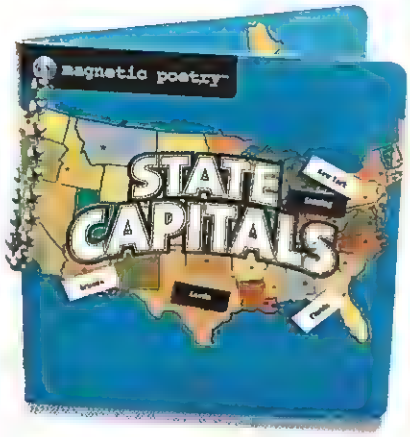
41 Mix **different** flavors of juice for a zippy after-school drink. You might find a new favorite combo!

While you are doing your homework, don't take any phone calls from friends. When you are finished, you can reward yourself with a cheerful phone chat.

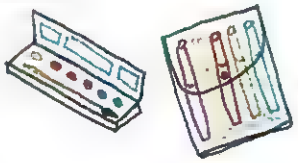
34

42 Make **rubber band** reminders! Take big, wide rubber bands (they should hang loosely on your arm) and stretch them around a soup can. Using **gel pens**, doodle designs on the rubber bands. Wear them, and you'll always know where to be!

43 For extra school tips and tools to make your own flash cards, check out **americangirl.com**!



44 **Challenge** yourself and enter a contest this year. The Council for Biotechnology Information is offering a $10,000 college scholarship to the winner of its "Food of the Future" drawing contest. Visit **www.whybiotech.com** for details.



45 Make your **bed** while you are still in it! Before you get out of bed, **pull** your covers over you as neatly as possible. Carefully get out, smooth any wrinkles, fluff your **pillows**, and you're done!

46 Test your **state capital** knowledge using the state capitals kit by Magnetic Poetry. It has the names of states on one side of the magnets and their capitals on the flip side. Toss it in your backpack and study on the go!

47 To save time looking through your stuff, **color**-coordinate your school subjects. For example, say math is **blue**. Use a blue folder and notebook, and cover your math book in blue paper.

48 If there's a **new** girl in class, **start** up a **conversation** with her. Here are three great conversation starters:

Do you have any pets?

Where did you move from?

What's your favorite sport?

49 If you are **nervous** about going back to school, **plan** on a place where you and your friends can **meet** and start your first day **together**.

50

Celebrate

the end of your first week of school. Turn the page for games and activities for a **fun** Friday night!

Turn Friday into *Fun*day with these family activities!

Fix a Mix!

Set up a trail-mix bar! Fill several bowls with items like granola, fresh berries, peanuts, dried cherries, raisins, M&M's, cereal, or whatever else sounds good to you. Grab a bowl and start mixing!

Don't Say It!

During dinner, choose a common word that cannot be said, such as "it" or "and." If a person says the forbidden word, he or she must moo like a cow!

gnillepS eeB

See who can spell the most words backwards. For an even more challenging game, give the speller a time limit. While you're at it, figure out everyone's backward name. Erin would be nirE!

Indoor Beach Party

Put beach towels on the floor and feast on sandwiches and chips. Wear sunglasses and summer duds. Play tropical music.

Family Act

Write down words to songs from CDs your family owns. Then turn on the tunes and take turns singing! While you are performing, make a music video with your siblings. Pick a song you all know and create some cool moves. Have Mom or Dad videotape it!

Taste Tester

Play a game that tests your taste buds. Peel labels off of baby food jars and number them. Put the same numbers on small pieces of masking tape and place them on the corresponding jars. Pass around the jars and have everyone taste the contents and jot down what flavors they are. Whoever guesses the most right is the winner!

Illustrations: Amanda Haley

Friday, October 5, is World Smile Day. Share a grin and celebrate!

Totally Great Ideas

Breakfast for Dinner

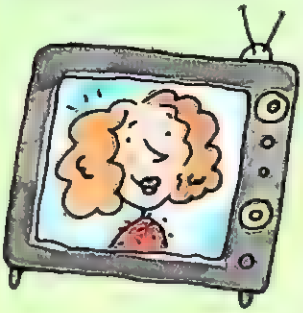
Feast on pancakes, waffles, sausage, and eggs. Don't forget to wear your pajamas!

Time Machine

Go back in time for a night! Pull out baby pictures of every member of your family. Find similarities among everyone and talk about favorite memories.

TV Bingo

Create cards that have nine squares. In each square, write a different item that could be found on TV—for example, a computer, a red-headed woman, or a black car. Make sure each card is different. Hand out cards and start channel surfing. Cover the squares as you see them. The first one with a full line covered wins!



Kooky Act

On slips of paper, write down characters, such as a clown or a teacher, and places, such as a video store or a bus station. Put the character slips in one bowl and the place slips in another. One person picks a slip of paper from each bowl and acts out the combination. The rest of the players must try to guess who and where the character is!

Clan Chant

Show your family spirit and make up your own cheer. "Mom, Dad, Max, and Jenn! The Smiths are the best, let's yell it again!"

House Olympics

Compete with your family for the gold medal in silly events such as folding the most towels in 15 seconds, making a bed with one hand the neatest, and sweeping a rubber band across the floor the fastest. Give awards to the winners!

Fun Jar

Designate a container in the house to store these Funday ideas. When Friday night comes, pull out an idea and get going. You'll never say, "Mom, what can we do tonight?" again!

for Friday

Get Psyched!

Do tryouts make you tremble? What can you do to make sure you shine in the spotlight? Read the questions, picture yourself in each of the situations, and circle the best response. Then read the answers carefully for tips that really work!

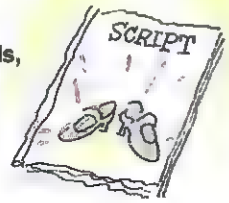
Quiz

1. Auditions for the school play are next week. You were born to play Dorothy! Every day after school, you…

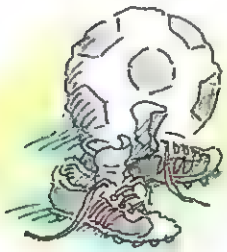
a. pat your hamster three times for good luck.

b. practice your audition lines in front of a mirror.

c. call your friends, and ask them if they think you'll get the part.



2. It's the night before soccer tryouts. You plan to…



a. go to bed early.

b. stay extra late at the park to practice your kicks and passes.

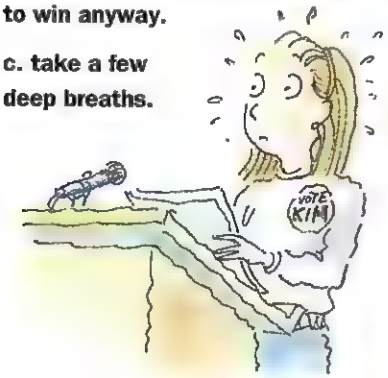
c. watch Mia Hamm in game videos.

3. You're running for student council president. It's time for your campaign speech—and you have butterflies the size of elephants in your stomach! To calm yourself down, you…

a. imagine everyone in the audience wearing silly underwear.

b. tell yourself you don't really want to win anyway.

c. take a few deep breaths.



4. Two, four, six, eight—making the cheer squad would be so great! An hour or so before the tryout, you…

a. eat a candy bar for a boost of energy.

b. snack on popcorn or pretzels.

c. grab a double cheeseburger and fries at Burger Bob's.

5. You're trying out for the gymnastics team. In the middle of your floor routine, you trip and fall. You…

a. get back up and finish your routine, ending with a smile.

b. run to the bathroom crying.

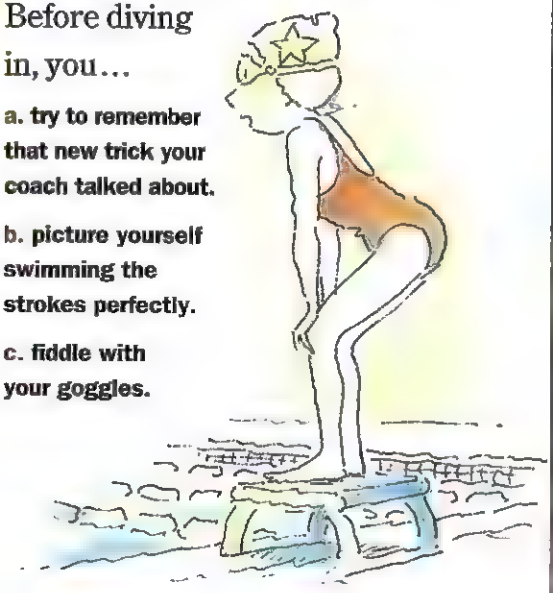
c. point out that the mat was too slippery, and ask the coach if you can start over.

6. You're at the pool with your toes on the mark, waiting for the starting signal. If these laps go well, you'll make the team! Before diving in, you…

a. try to remember that new trick your coach talked about.

b. picture yourself swimming the strokes perfectly.

c. fiddle with your goggles.



7. Bad news—the coach just announced the members of the track team, and you didn't make the cut. Right away, you…

a. remind yourself of all the mistakes you made at the tryout.

b. blame it on the coach. She never did like people with freckles, anyway.

c. ask the coach for a few pointers for next time.

How'd you do?

Turn the page and find out!

Answers These tips will help take the fear out of any tryout.

1b. It won't hurt to pat your pet, and talking to your friends may make you feel better. But you'll have a better chance for success if you do three things. First, find out all you can about the audition or tryout. Know when to arrive, what to bring, and where you will perform. Next, ask the director or coach what skills he or she wants to see. Then set aside time each day to practice. Talk or sing in front of a mirror, or ask a friend to rehearse with you. Finally, get feedback from someone you trust. Say something like, "Don't just tell me I'm doing fine—tell me how I can do better!"

2a. You probably won't learn anything new by watching last-minute game videos, and staying up late to practice will leave you too pooped to perform. Relax the night before with your family or friends, and turn in early. Aim for nine hours of sleep. Try not to let bedtime turn into worry time—before going to sleep, imagine yourself performing perfectly. Thinking positively will help make your dreams of success become real!

3c. It's natural to get jittery before a performance. Thinking about the competition, though, may make you more nervous—and imagining the audience in their underwear could crack your concentration! Instead, take some belly breaths—inhale slowly from your stomach, feeling the air fill your lungs. Exhale slowly, and repeat. Try saying a calming word to yourself as you breathe, like "Easy... easy... easy." Stephany, age 13, of Florida does belly breathing before her tennis matches. "I take ten deep breaths and wiggle my arms and legs to get rid of the tension in my body," she says. "It usually works!"

Think Like a Star

Believe it or not, even the pros get nervous. Here's their advice:

Trust yourself. "I think about the times that I've skated well under pressure, and I try to remember what that felt like. The most important thing for me to remember is definitely to trust myself."

Tara Lipinski, ice-skater

Picture it. "I never pictured myself crashing or falling off a beam. I always pictured myself doing my routine perfectly."

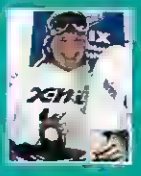
Mary Lou Retton, gymnast

Believe it. "As long as I believe it can be done, then I'm going to do it."

Sheryl Swoopes, basketball player

Say "I can," not "I can't." "If anyone ever tells me I can't do something, I set out to prove them wrong."

Jackie Joyner-Kersee, track runner



Have a good time! "Once I started having fun, everything started flowing so well for me."

Shannon Dunn, snowboarder

4b. A sugary snack will give you a boost but can leave you sagging an hour later. Eating a big meal could spell disaster for your stomach! Try munching on bagels, crackers, or popcorn an hour before your tryout. Patti, age 12, of New Jersey relies on pretzels before swim meets. "They're my comfort food!" she says. To avoid dehydration, it's important to drink plenty of water before, during, and after a sports tryout. Just remember to take bathroom breaks, too!

5a. Don't flip out because you flopped! Avoid calling attention to your mistake, and show your spirit and style by ending with a smile. Let the coach see you've got guts and determination—that's often what really counts!

6b. Now's the time to focus. Concentrate on the moment. Imagine a bird's-eye view of the tryout, then picture yourself close-up. Visualize yourself slicing through the water, delivering a great speech, or hitting every note. See the pictures in your head. If you believe it, you'll achieve it!

7c. No doubt about it—not reaching your goal is tough. Don't give up! If you tried out for something you love, stick with it. Ask the coach for pointers so you'll do better next time. When you're ready, think of some other way you could have fun this year. Then try it!

Chill Out!

Need more ways to calm down your nerves and psyche yourself up? Try these tips:

- Pick a theme song. Choose something that makes you feel strong and confident, like "Who I Am" by Jessica Andrews. Play the song in your head whenever you start to get nervous.

- Feeling tense? Use good scents. Experts say certain smells can affect your mood and energy. Try a lavender-scented lotion or bubble bath at night to help you relax. In the morning, a minty shampoo or shower gel will rev you up!

- Find a peaceful spot. Sit under a tree, hang out in your room, or go for a walk. Remember a time you felt great about yourself. Relive those moments for five minutes a day before the tryout. Get acquainted with a new hero—you!

- Dress for success. A week before your tryout, do a dress rehearsal. Make sure everything is clean and in good shape.

- Don't forget your lucky charm. As long as you've practiced faithfully, a lucky charm may give you an extra boost of confidence. If it's O.K. with your coach or director, bring one along. Good luck!

Photos: Tara Ignasiak and Jackie Joyner-Kersee, Mike Blake/Reuters; Mary Lou Retton: Archive Photos; Sheryl Swoopes: UPI Photo Service; Shannon Dunn: Sportsfile/Icon SMI; Illustrations: Noah Bradell

Mirror, Mirror

Make an adorable salt-dough mirror to brighten your wall!

YOU WILL NEED

- An adult to help you
- mixing spoon
- ⅓ cup warm water
- ⅓ cup salt
- mixing bowl
- ⅔ cup all-purpose flour
- rolling pin
- cookie sheet
- small craft mirror without plastic (found at craft stores)
- butter knife
- paint
- brushes
- Mod Podge
- glue
- ribbon

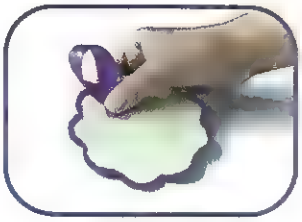
1 Stir water and salt together in bowl. Let stand for about 1 minute to let salt dissolve. Add flour and stir. When dough becomes too stiff to stir, use your hands to mix it.

2 Spill dough onto a hard, floured surface, and knead it. To knead dough, hold it with one hand while you push it away from you with your other hand. Then fold it back on itself.

3 Keep kneading until the dough is smooth and soft, but not sticky. You may have to add a little more flour. Roll out dough ½-inch thick with a floured rolling pin. Place dough on cookie sheet.

4 Press mirror into dough. Push dough against mirror's edges to overlap slightly, then cut a design around the mirror. Add dough decorations.

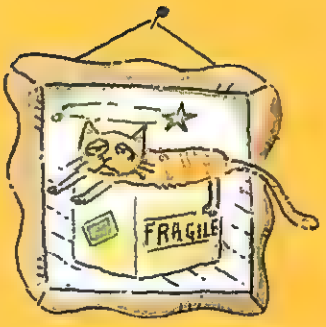
5 Ask an adult to bake at 200 degrees for 1 to 4 hours, checking about every half hour. Your project should stay in the oven until it is dry and hard.



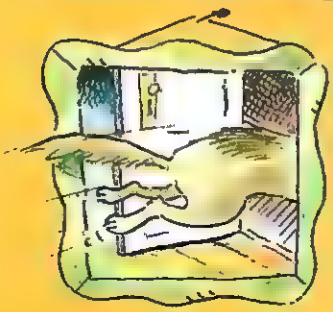
6 Let project cool completely. Paint. Let dry. Seal with Mod Podge and let dry. Glue a ribbon on the back to hang.

Photos: Jamie Young, Greg Zocher/Hot Shots Styling: Camela Decaire

For more cool salt-dough creations, see the book *Salt Dough*, available in bookstores.

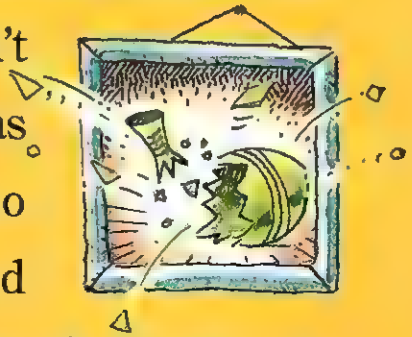


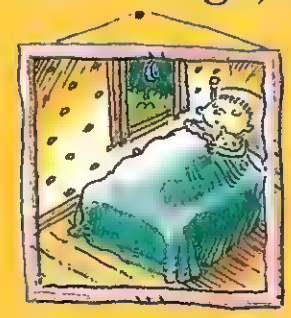
Marian and Simon were sent to bed early on the day that the Brown family moved. By then everyone had lost their temper with everyone else; the cat had been sick on the sitting room carpet; the dog had run away twice. If you have ever moved you will know what kind of a day it had been. Packing boxes and newspaper all over the place... sandwiches instead of proper meals... the kettle lost and a dresser stuck on the stairs



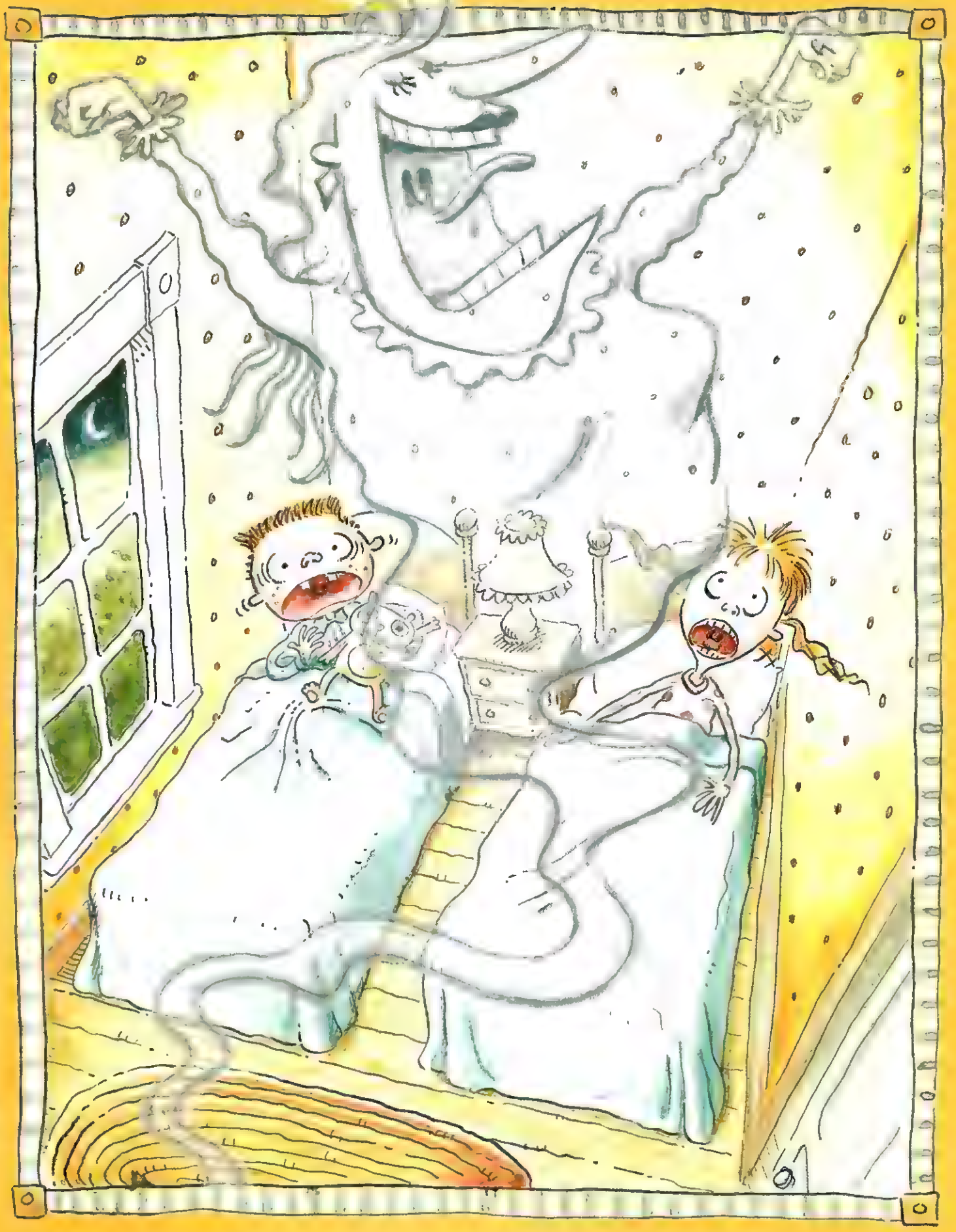
UNINVITED GHOSTS

and Mrs. Brown's favorite vase broken. There was bread and baked beans for supper, the television wouldn't work and the water wasn't hot so when all was said and done the children didn't object too violently to being packed off to bed. They'd had enough, too. They had one last argument about who was going to sleep by the window, put on their pajamas, got into bed, switched the lights off... and it was at that point that the GHOST came out of the bottom drawer of the chest of drawers.





by Penelope Lively



It oozed out, a gray cloudy shape about three feet long smelling faintly of woodsmoke, sat down on a chair and began to hum to itself. It looked like a bundle of sheets, except that it was not solid: you could see, quite clearly, the cushion on the chair beneath it.

Marian gave a shriek. "That's a ghost!"

"Oh, be quiet, dear, do," said the ghost. "That noise goes right through my head. And it's not nice to call people names." It took out a ball of yarn and some needles and began to knit.

What would you have done? Well, yes—Simon and Marian did just that and I daresay you can imagine what happened. You try telling your mother that you can't get to sleep because there's a ghost sitting in the room clacking its knitting needles and humming. Mrs. Brown said the kinds of things she could be expected to say and the ghost continued sitting there knitting and humming and Mrs. Brown went out, banging the door and saying threatening things about if there's so much as another word from either of you...

"She can't see it," said Marian to Simon.

"'Course not, dear," said the ghost. "It's the kiddies I'm here for. Love kiddies, I do. We're going to be ever such good friends."

"Go away!" yelled Simon. "This is our house now!"

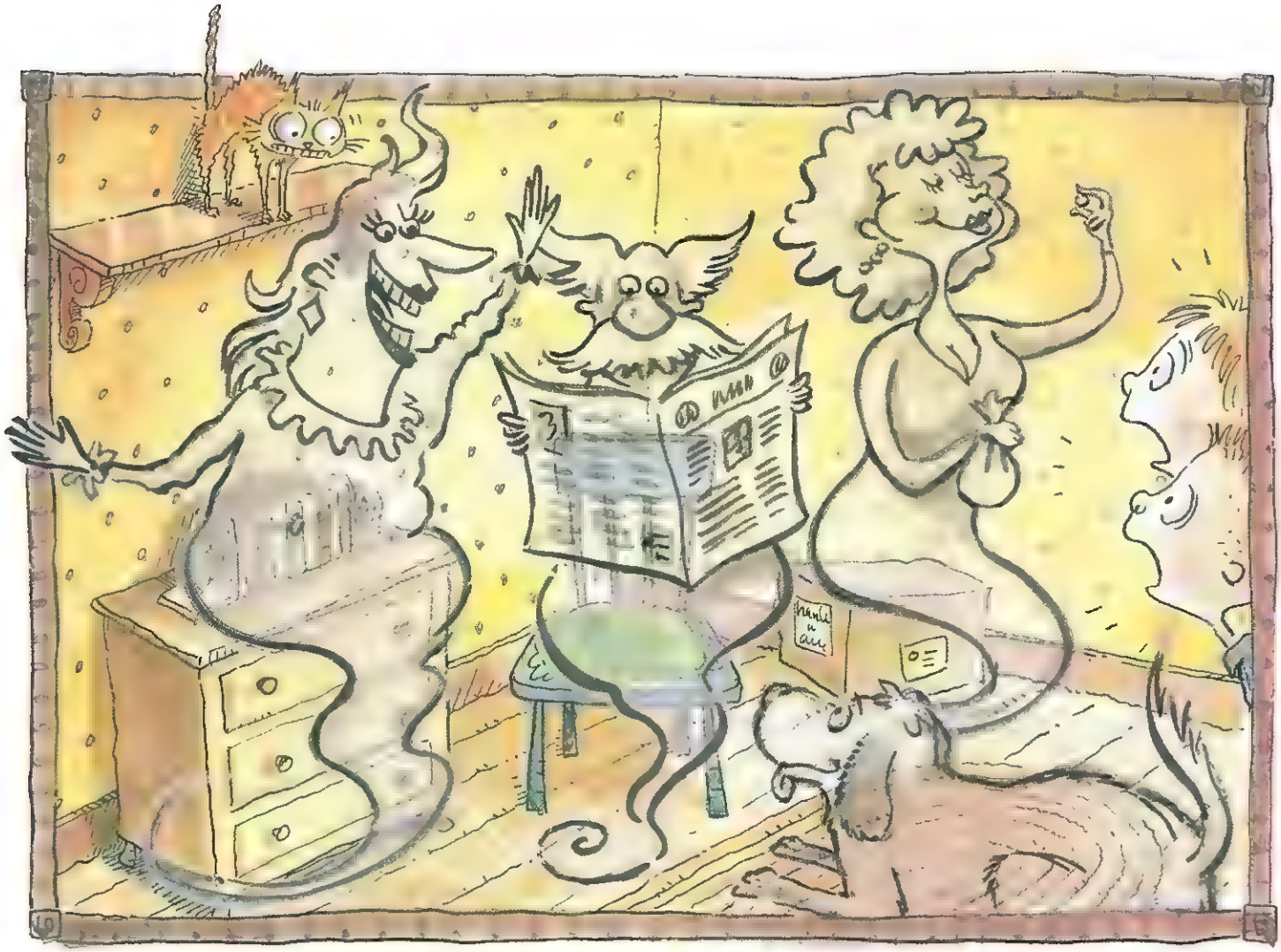
"No, it isn't," said the ghost smugly. "Always been here, I have. A hundred years and more. Seen plenty of families come and go, I have. Go to beddy-bye now, there's good children."

The children glared at it and buried themselves under the covers. And, eventually, slept.

The next night it was there again. This time it was smoking a long white pipe and reading a newspaper dated 1842. Beside it was a second gray cloudy shape. "Hello, dearies," said the ghost. "Say how do you do to my Auntie Edna."

"She can't come here too," wailed Marian.

"Oh yes she can," said the ghost. "Always comes here in the fall, does Auntie. She likes a change."



Auntie Edna was even worse, if possible. She sucked peppermint drops that smelled so strong that Mrs. Brown, when she came to kiss the children good night, looked suspiciously under their pillows. She also sang hymns in a loud squeaky voice. The children lay there groaning and the ghosts sang and rustled the newspapers and ate peppermints.

The next night there were three of them. "Meet Uncle Charlie!" said the first ghost. The children groaned.

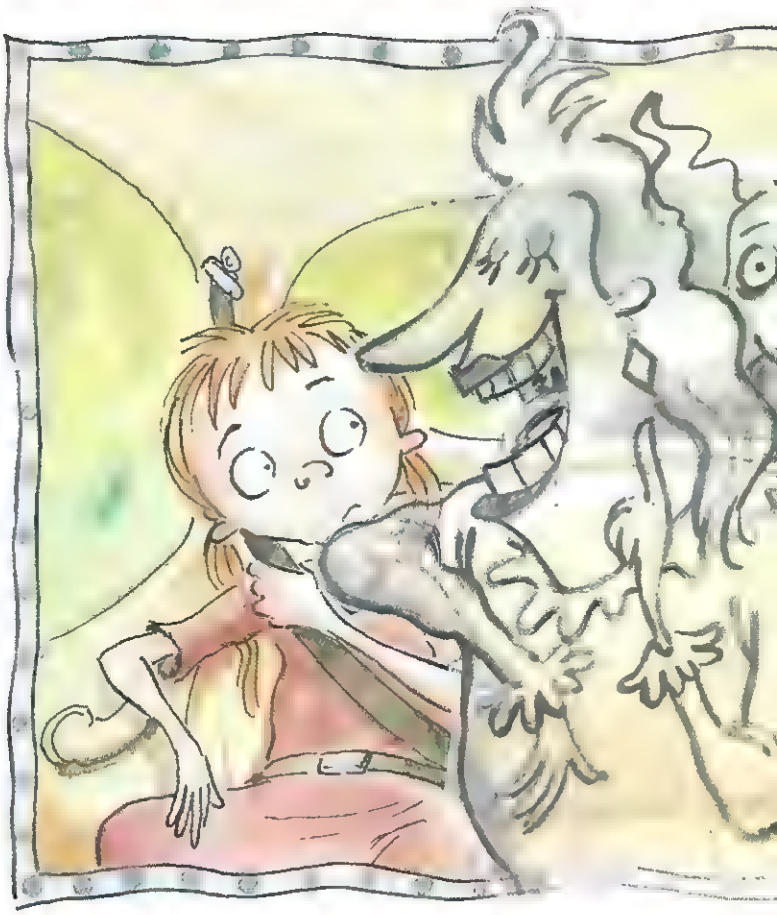
"And Jip," said the ghost. "Here, Jip, good dog—come and say hello to the kiddies, then." A large gray dog that you could see straight through came out from under the bed, wagging its tail. The cat, who had been curled up beside Marian's feet (it was supposed to sleep in the kitchen, but there are always ways for a resourceful cat to get what it wants), gave a howl and shot on top of the bookshelf, where it sat spitting. The dog lay down in the middle of the rug and set about scratching itself vigorously; evidently it had ghost fleas, too.

A LARGE GRAY DOG THAT YOU COULD SEE STRAIGHT THROUGH CAME OUT FROM UNDER THE BED.

Uncle Charlie was unbearable. He had a loud cough that kept going off like a machine gun and he told the longest most pointless stories the children had ever heard. He said he too loved kiddies and he knew kiddies loved stories. In the middle of the seventh story the children went to sleep out of sheer boredom.

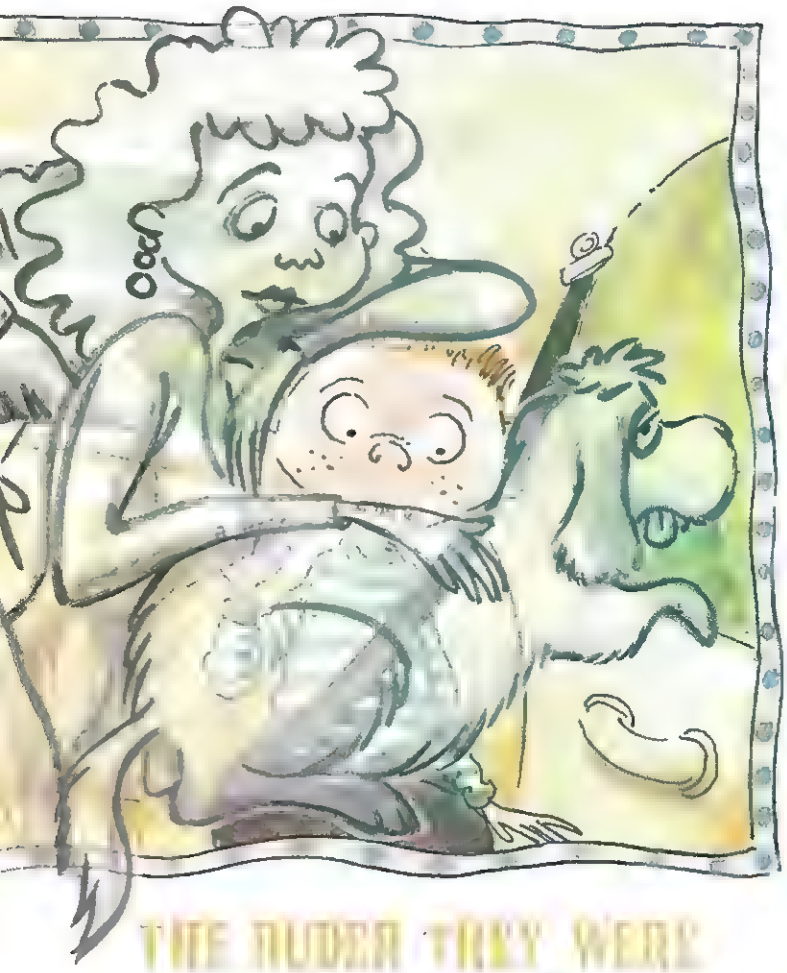
The following week the ghosts left the bedroom and were to be found all over the house. The children had no peace at all. They'd be quietly doing their homework and all of a sudden Auntie Edna would be breathing down their necks reciting arithmetic tables. The original ghost took to sitting on top of the television with its legs in front of the picture. Uncle Charlie told his stories all through the best programs and the dog lay permanently at the top of the stairs. The Browns' cat became quite hysterical, refused to eat, and went to live on the top shelf of the kitchen pantry.

Something had to be done. Marian and Simon also were beginning to show the effects; their mother decided they looked peaky and bought an appalling sticky brown vitamin medicine from the drugstore to strengthen them. "It's the ghosts!" wailed the children. "We don't need vitamins!" Their mother said severely that she didn't want to hear another word of this silly nonsense about ghosts. Auntie Edna, who was sitting smirking on the other side of the kitchen table at that very moment, nodded vigorously and took out a packet of mints which she sucked noisily.



"We've got to get them to go and live somewhere else," said Marian. But where, that was the problem, and how? It was then that they had a bright idea. On Sunday the Browns were all going to see their uncle who was rather rich and lived alone in a big house with thick carpets everywhere and empty rooms and the biggest color television you ever saw. Plenty of room for ghosts.

They were very cunning. They suggested to the ghosts that they might like a drive in the country. The ghosts said at first that they were quite comfortable where they were, thank you, and they didn't fancy these newfangled motorcars, not at their time of life. But then Auntie Edna remembered that she liked looking at the pretty flowers and the trees and finally they agreed to give it a try. They sat in a row in the back of the car. Mrs. Brown kept asking why there was such a strong smell of peppermint and Mr. Brown kept roaring at Simon and Marian to keep still while he



THE RUDER THEY WERE TO THE GHOSTS THE MORE THE GHOSTS LIKED IT.

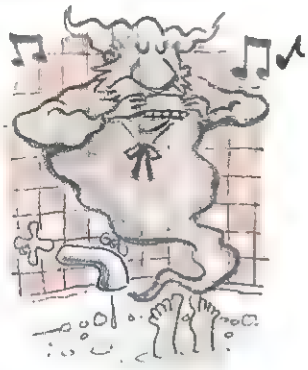
was driving. The fact was that the ghosts were shoving them; it was like being nudged by three cold damp washcloths. And the ghost dog, who had come along too of course, was carsick.

When they got to Uncle Dick's the ghosts came in and had a look round. They liked the expensive carpets and the enormous television. They slid in and out of the closets and walked through the doors and the walls and sent Uncle Dick's parakeets into a decline from which they have never recovered. Nice place, they said, nice and comfy.

"Why not stay here?" said Simon, in an offhand tone.

"Couldn't do that," said the ghosts firmly. "No kiddies. Dull. We like a place with a bit of life to it." And they piled back into the car and sang hymns all the way home to the Browns' house. They also ate toast. There were real toast crumbs on the floor and the children got the blame.

Simon and Marian were in despair. The ruder they were to the ghosts the more the ghosts liked it. "Cheeky!" they said indulgently. "What a cheeky little pair of kiddies! There now… come and give uncle a kiss." The children weren't even safe in the bath. One or other of the ghosts would come and sit on the taps and talk to them. Uncle Charlie had produced a harmonica and played the same tune over and over again; it was quite excruciating. The children went around with their hands over their ears. Mrs. Brown took them to the doctor to find out if there was something wrong with their hearing. The children knew better than to say anything to the doctor about the ghosts. It was pointless saying anything to anyone.



I don't know what would have happened if Mrs. Brown hadn't happened to make friends with Mrs. Walker from down the road. Mrs. Walker had twin babies, and one day she brought the babies along for lunch.

Now one baby is bad enough. Two babies are trouble in a big way. These babies created pandemonium. When they weren't both howling they were crawling around the floor pulling the tablecloths off the tables or hitting their heads on the chairs and hauling the books out of the bookcases. They threw their food all over the kitchen and flung cups of milk on the floor. Their mother mopped up after them and every time she tried to have a conversation with Mrs. Brown the babies bawled in chorus so that no one could hear a word.

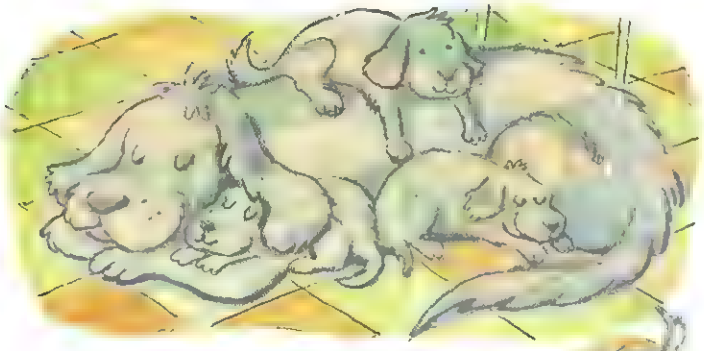
In the middle of this the ghosts appeared. One baby was yelling its head off and the other was gluing pieces of chewed up bread onto the front of the television. The ghosts swooped down on them with happy cries. "Oh!" they trilled. "Bless their little hearts then, diddums, give auntie a smile then." And the babies stopped in mid-howl and gazed at the ghosts. The ghosts cooed at the babies and the babies cooed at the ghosts. The ghosts chattered to the babies and sang them songs and the babies chattered back and were as good as gold for the next hour and their mother had the first proper conversation she'd had in weeks. When they went the ghosts stood in a row at the window, waving.

Simon and Marian knew when to seize an opportunity. That evening they had a talk with the ghosts. At first the ghosts raised objections. They didn't fancy the idea of moving, they said; you got set in your ways, at their age; Auntie

Edna reckoned a strange house would be the death of her.

The children talked about the babies, relentlessly.

And the next day they led the ghosts down the road, followed by the ghost dog, and into the Walkers' house. Mrs. Walker doesn't know to this day why the babies, who had been screaming for the last half hour, suddenly stopped and broke into great smiles. And she has never understood why, from that day forth, the babies became the most tranquil, quiet, amiable babies in the area. The ghosts kept the babies amused from morning to night. The babies thrived; the ghosts were happy; the ghost dog, who was actually a female, settled down so well that she had puppies which is one of the most surprising aspects of the whole business. The Brown children heaved a sigh of relief and got back to normal life. The babies, though, I have to tell you, grew up somewhat peculiar. ★



Meet the Author

PENELOPE LIVELY

I have always lived in old houses—the oldest of all was built in 1620. But if there were ghosts, they never talked to me. I wish they had—I'd have had a lot of questions to ask. Actually, I think any house has ghosts—we all leave a piece of ourselves wherever we have lived.

Frightful Fiction

Brave readers rate spooky stories.

You could read this book in a graveyard and not get scared.

This book is suspenseful and spooky. It might give you the shivers.

This book is scary. It will make your spine tingle and your skin crawl.

This book is *really* scary! Read it at your own risk—during the daytime.

In *Bunnicula,* a family finds a bunny at the movie theater. The family's cat thinks the bunny is a vampire because he sucks the juice out of vegetables! I liked it because the author leaves it up to you to figure out if he really is a vampire.

Elizabeth Dixon
Age 10, Michigan

In *The Vile Village,* Violet, Klaus, and Sunny are orphans who live in a town with lots of rules—and a lot of birds. They try to find their friends and escape from evil Count Olaf, who has only one eyebrow! This book was funny and weird.

Leaura Sauth
Age 9, South Carolina

The Witches is a good book about a boy and his grandma who find 85 witches on their vacation! The witches turn the boy into a mouse, but he still ends up being a hero. It's an exciting story, but maybe a little scary for younger readers.

Briana Harris
Age 12, Pennsylvania

Uninvited Ghosts © 1981 Penelope Lively Published by E. P. Dutton

Quiz

What's Your Halloween Style?

1. Your favorite breakfast cereal is...

a. Count Chocula.

b. Lucky Charms.

c. Any kind, as long as it has a good surprise inside.

3. Your favorite part of a thunderstorm is...

a. when the power goes out.

b. the lightning.

c. riding your bike through all the puddles afterward.

2. To you, the best part of a slumber party is...

a. playing "Light as a Feather."

b. wearing cute pajamas.

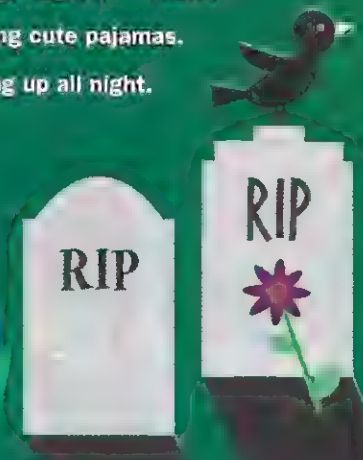
c. staying up all night.

4. When it comes to nail polish, you prefer...

a. glow in the dark.

b. glitter.

c. a different color for each finger.



5. Your favorite TV rerun is...

a. *The Addams Family.*

b. *Charlie's Angels.*

c. *I Love Lucy.*

6. If you were a cat, you'd be...

a. Salem in *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch.*

b. Hello Kitty.

c. Garfield.

7. You're at a monster movie with your friend. During a tense scene, you...

a. grab your friend's arm, just to make her jump.

b. cover your eyes.

c. laugh at the phony special effects.

When it comes to costumes, do you go for **silly, spooky,** or **totally glam?** Take this quiz and find out!

American Ghoul

If you circled mostly a's, you love the chills and thrills of a good scare. To you, no fear means no fun! Need a costume idea? Try going as Frankenstein's sister, Harry Potter's Moaning Myrtle, or Count Olaf from *A Series of Unfortunate Events*. This night will be a scream!

Glitter Gal

If you circled mostly b's, Halloween is your night to shine! You love wearing pretty things, and you're perfectly at ease getting all glammed up. This year, try dressing as a prom queen, a disco dancer, or a movie star headed for the Oscars. Pass the [illegible]

Funny Girl

If you circled mostly c's, it's going to be ha-ha-Halloween for you! You love dreaming up wild and wacky costumes. You'd look great this year as an octopus, a board game, or a picture frame. Your friends will howl with laughter!

Illustrations: Monica Gesue

The Giggle Gang

Hide and Go Eek!

Find your way through the twists and turns of the Giggle Gang's fun house.

Why did the monster put a "Keep Off!" sign on her lawn? She wanted to mark her terror-tory.
Jennifer Muggeo
Age 11, New Hampshire

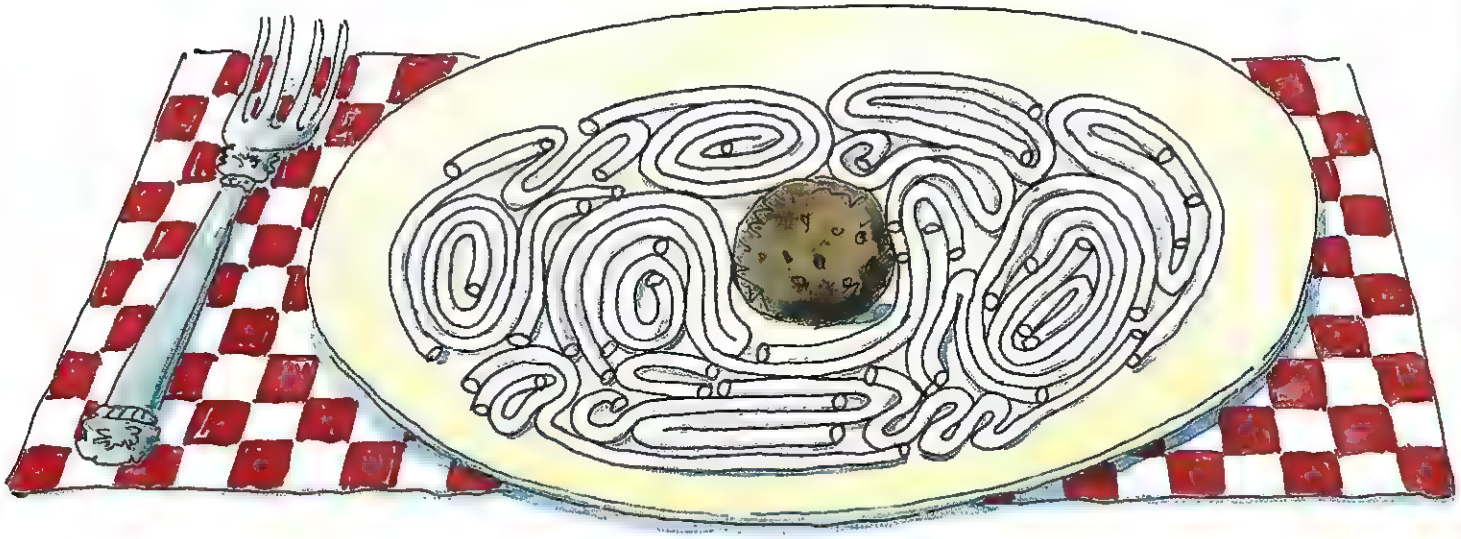
What monster loves to eat hot dogs? Frankenfurter!
Rachel Stiles
Age 11, Illinois

Why didn't the skeleton go to the Halloween dance? He didn't have any body to take with him.
Ashley Andres
Age 10, Indiana

All answers on page 42.

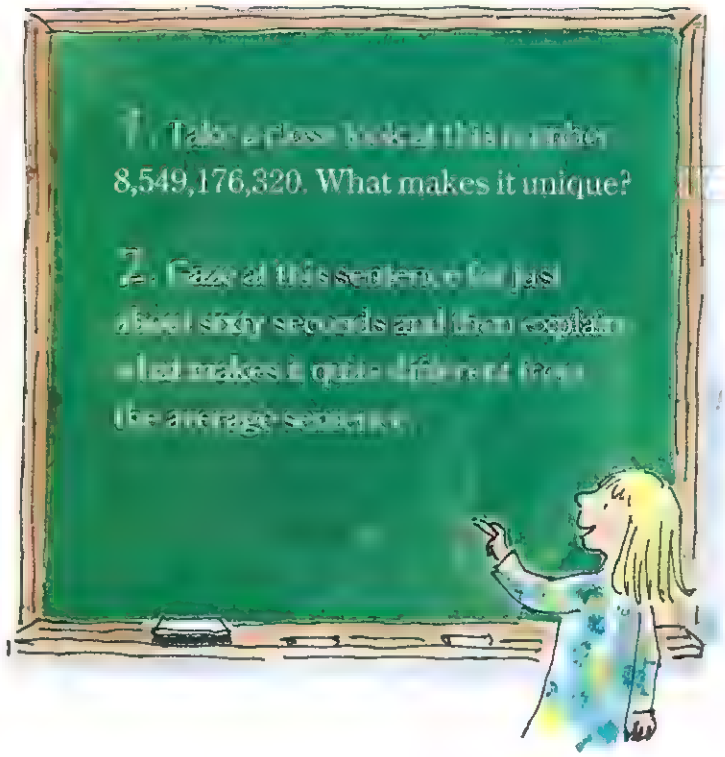
Oodles of Noodles!

The school chef wants to make sure all her servings of spaghetti are equal. To help the chef out, count the noodles on this plate. For a challenge, try counting without marking them in any way!



Stumped!

See if you can solve these brain benders.


1. Take a close look at this number: 8,549,176,320. What makes it unique?
2. Say all this aloud, but just about sixty seconds and then explain what makes it quite different from the average sentence.

Scary Scramblers

Help the Giggle Gang girls unscramble the silly sayings on the left to make the Halloween words on the right.

1. a new hello	A. trick or treat
2. cat terror kit	B. caramel apple
3. replace a lamp	C. haunted house
4. no jack rental	D. ghost stories
5. he housed a nut	E. Halloween
6. goose thirsts	F. jack-o'-lantern

Illustrations: Paul Meisel Oodles of Noodles puzzle: Linda Healy

Howl-oween! Jessica Bolognani Age 10, Vermont **If a snowman and a vampire got married and had a baby, what do you think they would name her? Frostbite!** Erika Koch Age 13, Tennessee

What animal is really big but really hard to find? An elephantom. Sarah Uptograft Age 9, Washington **What's the coyote's favorite holiday?**

The Giggle Gang

Add It Up

Polish your math skills with this tricky tallying game.

You need two or more players and a pencil and paper to play.

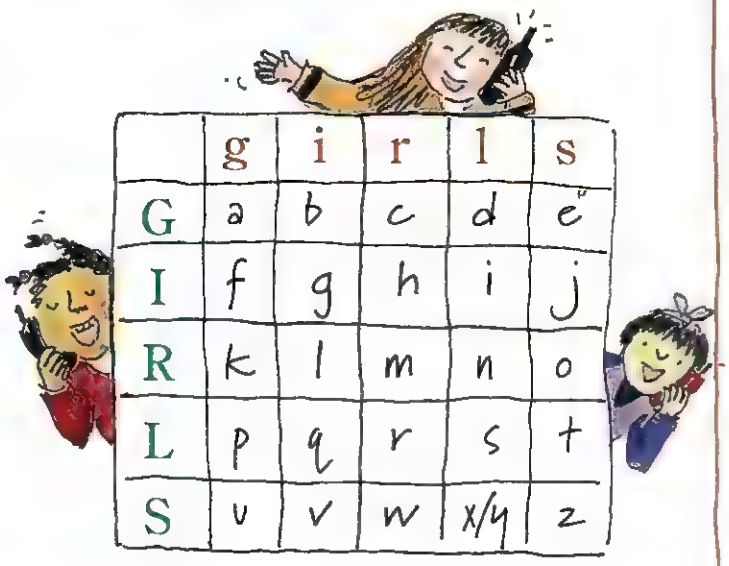
1. **The first player writes down any number from one to nine.**

2. **The next player adds another number from one to nine to the first number and writes the sum below the first number.**

3. **Players continue taking turns adding numbers from one to nine to the running total. The object of the game is to be the player who brings the total to 100. Remember, not only are you trying to get to 100, you're also trying to stop the other players from having the chance to bring the total to 100. It's trickier than it sounds!**

Girl Talk

This cool code comes from Bridget Baumgart and Anna Jenks, both age 12, of Michigan. Just look *across* the grid and then *down* the grid to figure out what two-letter combination stands for any letter of the alphabet.



	g	i	r	l	s
G	a	b	c	d	e
I	f	g	h	i	j
R	k	l	m	n	o
L	p	q	r	s	t
S	u	v	w	x/y	z

Now decode this secret message:

Ii Il Lr Ri Ll Lr Sg Ri Gs !

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ !

Answer Box

Stumped!: 1. The number contains each numeral from zero to nine one time, *and* the numerals appear in alphabetical order. 2. The sentence uses every letter in the alphabet.

Oodles of Noodles!: The plate contains 24 noodles.

Scary Scramblers:
1. E, 2. A, 3. B, 4. F, 5. C, 6. D

Girl Talk: Girls rule!

The buzzword, brouhaha, is used on page 47.

Hide and Go Eek!:

What did the farm girl use to wake herself up in the morning? A clock-a-doodle-doo! Farrah Arkusan, Age 11, Texas

How do you make real gold soup? You put in 14 carrots! Shannon Lawley, Age 13, Pennsylvania

What did one eye say to the other? "Just between you and me, something smells." Kelly Pearson, Age 12, Rhode Island

What kind of shoes are made from banana skins? Slippers! Katy Temple :-) Age 11, Alabama

Why couldn't the piano get into the music store? It forgot its keys! Summer Peoples, Age 11, Alabama

Who's That Girl?

Here's an American girl of yesterday. Read the clues about her and guess who she is now.

Clue 1

My older sister and I shared a room and a bunk bed. Because I was neat and she was messy, she'd tease me and say, "You even think my trash is too sloppy for your wastebasket!"

Clue 2

As soon as I could babysit, I started saving money so that I could visit distant places. I kept a list of cities in Europe that I longed to see. At 18, I finally had enough money to take my dream trip!

Clue 3

I loved my huge collection of model horses, and I rode real ones whenever I could. My asthma and small size kept me from most sports, but on horseback, I was finally big and powerful.

Clue 4

After my parents gave me an art set, I entered every art contest I could find. Once I even scooped up a great prize: free ice cream cones for a year!

Here I am at age 10.

Clue 5

In fourth grade, I had an extra-special assignment: creating little felt animals and stories for the kindergarten class. When my imagination made the children listen and laugh, I felt great.

Take a guess!

When this American girl grew up, she became:

- ☐ a world traveler
- ☐ a teacher
- ☐ an author and illustrator
- ☐ a horse trainer

Turn the page and find out if you're right!

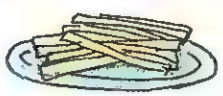
Illustrations: Laune Caple

She's Marissa Moss

As a girl with asthma, Marissa Moss felt puny, weak, and left out of the activities other kids enjoyed. But her lively imagination was huge! "I loved telling stories and drawing pictures to go with them," remembers the author and illustrator of *Amelia's Notebook* and the other Amelia stories. "In my imagination, I could be strong, go anywhere, and do anything!"

When Marissa was young, she kept a journal and noted the news of her southern California neighborhood. She recalls, "I wrote and drew all the things I was thinking and doing, just like Amelia does."

A move to a new neighborhood when she was 13 inspired Marissa's first Amelia book, *Amelia's Notebook*. Amelia's sister, Cleo, is based on Marissa's older sister, who often teased Marissa by putting Cheerios in her own nose. But Cleo sticks French fries in her nose instead, says Marissa, because they are easier to draw! The scary fire that destroys part of Amelia's school in *Amelia Writes Again* really happened at Marissa's elementary school. And in her latest book—*Oh Boy, Amelia!*—there are more adventures based on Marissa's childhood experiences.



Turning her stories and drawings into books wasn't easy for Marissa. She spent five years—and received hundreds of rejections—trying to find a publisher for her first book. Marissa's determination to be an author and artist paid off, though. She says, "I'm very lucky because I get to write and draw and travel to see the world. My dreams have come true!" ★

Marissa's advice to American girls:

"Don't take rejection to heart. Success is 90 percent determination and 10 percent talent. If you really want something, keep trying!"

Marissa Moss

You can write to Marissa
c/o American Girl
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

Illustrations: Susan McAliley

Mini Mag

With the Mini Mag, you can make a miniature copy of *American Girl*. All you need are scissors and a stapler. Read the directions all the way through before you begin.

1 **Cut out each pair of pages only on the dotted lines. Be sure to cut around the tabs marked with the letters A, B, C, and D.**

2 **Stack the pages on top of one another in the order shown below, with the letters on the tabs facing up.**

Continued ☛

Mini Mag

3 Fold the stack of pages in half along the solid line in the center. The cover of the magazine should now be on top. Run your fingernail down the folded edge to help the pages lie flat.

4 Open the folded stack. Staple along the center line. Cut off the tabs, and you're done!

HELP!

Dear *American Girl*,

The kids on my bus are really wild, and the bus driver gets us all in trouble with the principal. I've tried talking to the trouble-makers, but they don't care. The bus driver said that she can't only punish the kids who don't follow the rules. Help!

Frustrated

Having a brouhaha on the bus puts everyone in danger. And it's really unfair to be punished if you follow the rules. In this case, it's not tattling to tell your parents, and your principal, about the whole situation. Let them know how frustrated you are, and see what they can do. If the wild behavior on the bus continues, find another way to get to school, at least until those kids are under control.

★

Dear *American Girl*,

When my friends tell me secrets, sometimes I tell others. It has gotten me into hot water! I want to earn my friends' trust and keep it, but it's hard! Can I learn to seal my lips?

Blabbermouth

When you're tempted to let a secret slip, try these tips: Write all about the secret in your journal. Or tell your dog all the juicy details. Or write a story about the secret, changing the names of the people involved. That way, you can enjoy "telling" the secret *and* keep your friends' trust.

★

Dear *American Girl*,

I'm starting middle school this year, and when I looked at my classes I noticed that I'm not in advanced reading, even though I was one of the best readers in my grade. What should I do?

Not good enough

Maybe there was a mistake, so check with your teacher. If you *are* in the right class, try not to focus on the name so much. If the work is challenging, it's a good fit for you. But if you find it's way too easy, talk with your teacher about changing classes. Whichever class you end up in, what matters is that you're trying your best and learning new things.

★

Dear *American Girl*,

I have a friend who interrupts me when I'm talking. It drives me crazy! Is there any way I can tell her without hurting her feelings?

So annoyed

Your friend probably doesn't even realize she's doing it. Just keep talking the next time she tries to interrupt, pretending like you didn't notice. If she doesn't take the hint, say, "I feel like you aren't listening to me. Let me finish what I was saying." Even when your friend realizes what she's doing, it may be hard for her to break her habit. You and your friend can also work out a signal, like a wink, that you can give when she interrupts. Give her a chance to change her ways, and be sure to listen when it's her turn to talk.

Illustrations: Scott Nash

MORE HELP!

Dear *American Girl*,

My brother is perfect. He's on a varsity team, he has perfect friends, he volunteers, and he always has perfect grades. I work really hard but my parents never think it's enough.

Unsung Worker

Don't let living with Superbrother make you feel like just a sidekick. But before you can really shine, you need to find out what *your* talents are. Tell your parents, "I feel like no matter how hard I try, I'm always in Steve's shadow." Ask them to help you find activities that are right for you. Once you're doing well at something you enjoy, you'll feel super, too.

★

Dear *American Girl*,

This year my friend wanted me to do something at school that was against the rules. I wanted to say no, but I was afraid she would get mad at me, so I did it. Now she wants me to do it again. How can I tell her no?

Can't Say No

Tell her no by saying no. You can say, "No way," or "I don't feel like it," or "Nope," or "I don't think that's a good idea," or even "Not in a million years!" Let your friend know that you are uncomfortable breaking the rules. Don't back down, and don't worry about making your friend mad. In fact, why aren't *you* mad that *she's* trying to make you break the rules again?

★

Dear *American Girl*,

My mom was a cheerleader when she was younger. She wants me to become a cheerleader, too, but that isn't my kind of thing. I don't want to make her feel bad.

Not my thing

Avoid criticizing cheerleading *in general*. Think about what it is—specifically—about cheerleading that doesn't appeal to you. Is it the uniforms? The high-flying stunts? The yelling? The cheering at games instead of playing the game yourself? Whatever it is, focus on *that* when you talk to your mom. Tell her what you would enjoy doing instead. Your mom may be a little disappointed, but she won't be too upset as long as you do something that's as fun for you as cheerleading was for her.

★

Advice from You

"If you want to tell your mom or dad something while they are on the phone, write a note. If it's a question, write it and say: Yes or No (circle one). It works, and your parents won't get mad!"

Anna Remus
Age 10, Minnesota

Need advice? Got advice? Write: Help!

AmericanGirl
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

Computers help kids learn. But lots of kids don't have access to computers. That's where Caroline and Christy Caruso come in. These Florida sisters specialize in getting used computers to kids in need. "Companies are just throwing away their old computers, and they're still good," explains Caroline. In less than three years, the Carusos have recycled more than 150 computers!

The girls spread the word about their project, called Kids on Computers, through flyers and local newspapers. With help from family and friends, they collect used computers from businesses and individuals. The computers end up in Caroline and Christy's workshop—their bedroom—where the sisters get them ready for kids to use and enjoy. Kids sit down for a tech lesson from Caroline, 10, or Christy, 17, before heading home with their "new" computers.

The sisters want as many people as possible to take advantage of their idea. "I hope that other kids will start Kids on Computers in their state," says Caroline. "It will really make a difference." To find out where you can donate a computer in your area, visit sharetechnology.org.

Do you have a friend who shines as a volunteer? Maybe you're a star volunteer yourself. Write to the address on page 2 to tell us all about the shining stars you know. Each girl we honor receives a certificate and a sparkly star pendant—and AG will donate $500 to her cause. ★

Photo: Alex McNight

Photo: Greg Zocher/Hot Shots Wrapping paper courtesy of Mem-G Tags & Co.

AmericanGirl

Carefully cut out along dotted lines.

Dress up your locker and room with our AG Poster and Doorknob Sign!

The superstar is IN.

AmericanGirl

Carefully cut out
along dotted lines

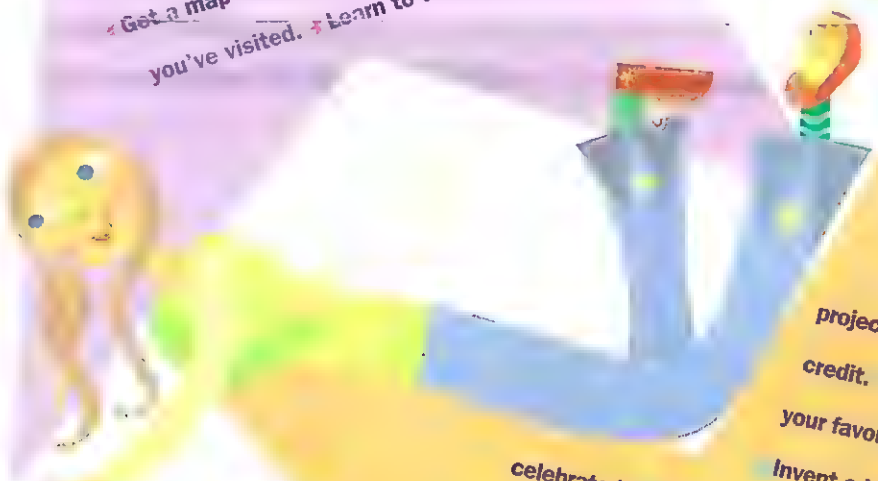
Shhhh!
Star student
at work!

Be a Star!

Make your year shine with these bright ideas.
See if you can do them all!

Get up in time to watch the sun rise. Bead an ankle bracelet. Celebrate your half birthday. Give a compliment each day for a week. Find out your teacher's favorite book. Throw a karaoke party. Write a letter to yourself to open in five years. Play mini golf. Take a roll of pictures. Hang a bird feeder outside your window. Send a valentine to someone in a nursing home. Figure out what your phone number spells. Stand up for yourself. Stand up for someone else. Learn a yoga pose. Make a photo album of your family. Get a map of the U.S. and color in every state you've visited. Learn to use chopsticks.

believe



Do a project for extra credit. Re-read your favorite book. Invent a holiday and celebrate it. Ask Grandma about her best

in your diary where you'll be in

you've visited.

Do a project for extra credit. Re-read your favorite book. Invent a holiday and celebrate it. Ask Grandma about her best birthday. Write down in your diary where you'll be in 2020. Watch old home movies. Go bowling. Pick a star in the sky and name it. Find your house on a map of your hometown. Hold the door open for someone. Start a mystery book club. Read the whole newspaper—not just the comics. Take a walk in the rain with a friend. Wear bright shoelaces. Warm up your pajamas in the dryer before bedtime. Help someone learn how to use a computer.

Write a thank-you note. Wear mismatched socks, and see if anyone notices. Give a week's allowance to charity. Try sushi. Tell your pet a bedtime story. Decorate your locker. Write a poem on the sidewalk. See what you can buy at a yard sale for $1. Eat a double-decker peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

★ Make a reading fort in your room. ★ Go out for breakfast on a school day. ★ Learn to give a good handshake: look the person in the eyes, smile, and shake her hand firmly. ★ Invent a synchronized swimming routine. ★ Make up nicknames for everyone in your family.

wish

Say "hi" in Japanese: "konnichiwa" (koh-NEE-chee-wah). ★ Start a countdown to your favorite holiday. ★ Name the squirrel that lives in your yard. ★ Turn off your ...one day. ★ Learn a magic trick. ★ Mix your ...orite cereals together. ...r to the President. ...ing suit.

★ Tell a joke. ★ Invent a smoothie. ★ Have a rainbow w... wear red one day, orange th... then yell...

your family.
Say "hi" in Japanese: "konnichiwa" (koh-NEE-chee-wah). ★Start a countdown to your favorite holiday. ★Name the squirrel that lives in your yard. ★Turn off your TV for one day. ★Learn a magic trick. ★Mix your favorite cereals together. ★Write a letter to the President. ★Design a swimming suit.
★Tell a joke. ★Invent a smoothie. ★Have a rainbow week—wear red one day, orange the next day, then yellow—go all the way to purple. ★Sing to your houseplants.
★Send yourself a postcard. ★Visit an observatory, and learn how to find a constellation. ★Pack lunch for Mom. ★Become a vegetarian for a day. ★Paint your sneakers.
Wish on a star!
dream
AmericanGirl

Star Signatures

Here's a place for autographs,
Special memories, jokes and laughs.
Collect friends' names throughout the year—
Create a stellar souvenir!

This year has been:

We laughed so hard when:

Remember w

I'll never forget when:

An absolutely crazy time was when:

Don't ever forget:

Our song

An absolutely crazy time was when:

Don't ever forget:

Our song:

Remember this?

My favorite memory of us:

AmericanGirl

Illustrations: Tracy McGuinness